

From: Alpern, Michael [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=7A6D1FE1F61646D6B96ED0DD6F6C33CD-ALPERN, MIC]
Sent: 4/30/2021 8:29:29 PM
To: Jordan, Deborah [Jordan.Deborah@epa.gov]; Giarmoleo, Julia [Giarmoleo.Julia@epa.gov]; Manzanilla, Enrique [Manzanilla.Enrique@epa.gov]; Lyons, John [Lyons.John@epa.gov]; Huang, Judy [Huang.Judy@epa.gov]; Chesnutt, John [Chesnutt.John@epa.gov]; Duarte, Romie [Duarte.Romie@epa.gov]; Helmlinger, Andrew [Helmlinger.Andrew@epa.gov]
Subject: Bloomberg piece, w/more focus on EPA, on DDT deep ocean disposal

FYI. I note the quote from Senator Padilla's office, noting that he will get involved in this issue as well.

--Mike

California Lawmakers Demand Cleanup of Old Dumped DDT Barrels

April 30, 2021, 12:09 PM

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- DDT detected roughly 12 miles off Los Angeles
- Dumping documented between 1940s and 1970s

California lawmakers are urging federal officials and Congress to act after researchers mapped what appeared to be more than 25,000 barrels dumped in an area off the coast of Los Angeles known for DDT contamination.

The Environmental Protection Agency is also working with state and federal agencies to investigate historical dumping of acid waste containing the pesticide dichlorodiphenyl-trichloroethane (DDT) in a nearby area northeast of Santa Catalina Island, Mike Alpern, EPA's director of public affairs for the agency's Pacific Southwest region, said in an email.

The Assembly passed a resolution 70-0 Thursday calling for action, following the mapping announcement earlier this week. The resolution now needs Senate approval to be forwarded to Congress.

"This is probably the greatest environmental crime in the history of California," Assembly member Al Muratsuchi (D) said before the vote. "We need to call out the federal authorities, the EPA, to prosecute this as what it is, an environmental crime."

The pesticide was banned for agricultural in the U.S. in 1972, with opposition driven by Rachel Carson's 1962 book "Silent Spring," which helped inspire the environmental movement.

Dumped From Vessels

Researchers from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at University of California San Diego found barrels throughout 36,000 acres of the sea floor, they said at an Apr. 26 virtual briefing arranged by Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.).

Patterns of the debris field suggest the barrels were dumped from moving vessels for as long as 11 miles, Eric Terrill, the chief scientist on the expedition, said in a news release. The hope is that the high-resolution data will help officials come up with a plan to address the dumping, he said.

The *Los Angeles Times* reported in October that dumping occurred in the area decades ago, which led to the ocean floor mapping by Scripps and the U.S. Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"The expedition's findings confirm fears that a large number of barrels containing DDT-laced industrial waste were dumped off the coast of California and are now impacting marine life and potentially public health," Feinstein said in a statement after the Scripps briefing.

Feinstein sent letters to the EPA and Commerce Department last month asking them to prioritize cleanup of the site.

Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Calif.), a member of the Environment and Public Works Committee, is concerned by the findings and will work with Feinstein and Biden to clean up the site, communications director Vanessa Valdivia said in an email.

State Jurisdiction

California's environmental agencies have met multiple times with the EPA, though the state has jurisdiction only three miles into the ocean.

California Environmental Protection Agency Secretary Jared Blumenfeld would like to see an investigation in the San Pedro Basin where DDT waste from Montrose Chemical Corp. has been documented, he said in a letter to EPA Region 9.

The basin is within the area Scripps surveyed and where Montrose's disposal company and others dropped waste until the Ocean Dumping Act passed in 1972, Scripps said.

Montrose manufactured DDT for 35 years at its Torrance, Calif. site, which was added to the EPA's Superfund list in 1989. Remediation of coastal areas is still ongoing.

To contact the reporter on this story: Emily C. Dooley at edooley@bloombergindustry.com

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From: Alpern, Michael

Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 1:18 PM

To: Jordan, Deborah <Jordan.Deborah@epa.gov>; Giarmoleo, Julia <Giarmoleo.Julia@epa.gov>; Manzanilla, Enrique <Manzanilla.Enrique@epa.gov>; Lyons, John <Lyons.John@epa.gov>; Huang, Judy <Huang.Judy@epa.gov>; Chesnutt, John <Chesnutt.John@epa.gov>; Duarte, Romie <Duarte.Romie@epa.gov>; Helmlinger, Andrew <Helmlinger.Andrew@epa.gov>

Subject: The Guardian on DDT deep ocean disposal

A well written piece by UK's The Guardian on our issue du jour. The "The solution? 'We just don't know'" section at the end is pretty fair, and throughout there are no potshots taken at the EPA. The reporter didn't reach out to us on this one (but he did reach out to the Montrose Corporation!).

--Mike

From: Alexander, Joshua <Alexander.Joshua@epa.gov>

Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 1:04 PM

To: Alpern, Michael <Alpern.Michael@epa.gov>

Subject: RE: R9 news clips for HQ

Mike,

I didn't know if you saw this from the Guardian, which is related to the LA Times story.

California's legacy of DDT waste: underwater dump site uncovers a toxic history

The discovery of tens of thousands of underwater barrels containing what scientists believe to be chemical waste has raised alarm and reopened scrutiny into a history of toxic dumping that persisted off the California coast into the 1970s.

A team of scientists announced this week that they had found more than 25,000 containers, many of which they believe to be DDT waste, which has been linked to cancer and disease in humans and mass die-off events in the natural world. The barrels cover a seafloor area double the size of Manhattan off the coast of the Santa Catalina Island, near Los Angeles.

Thanks, Josh

From: Alpern, Michael <Alpern.Michael@epa.gov>

Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 11:28 AM

To: Ford, Margaret <Ford.Margaret@epa.gov>; Barkett, Bonnie <Barkett.Bonnie@epa.gov>; Cohen, Deborra <Cohen.Deborra@epa.gov>; Schmidt, David <Schmidt.David@epa.gov>; Lane, Jackie <Lane.Jackie@epa.gov>; Sullivan, Sarah <Sullivan.Sarah@epa.gov>; Clark, Hilary <Clark.Hilary@epa.gov>; Pauley, Gavin <Pauley.Gavin@epa.gov>; Alexander, Joshua <Alexander.Joshua@epa.gov>; Giarmoleo, Julia <Giarmoleo.Julia@epa.gov>; Ty, Fatima <Ty.Fatima@epa.gov>; Gerdes, Jason <Gerdes.Jason@epa.gov>; Anderson, Julie <Anderson.Julie@epa.gov>; Hood, Timonie <Hood.Timonie@epa.gov>; Nazmi, Niloufar <Nazmi.Niloufar@epa.gov>; Scott, Jeff <Scott.Jeff@epa.gov>; Ebbert, Laura <Ebbert.Laura@epa.gov>; Manzanilla, Enrique <Manzanilla.Enrique@epa.gov>; James, Duane <James.Duane@epa.gov>; Miller, Amy <Miller.Amy@epa.gov>; Torres, Tomas <Torres.Tomas@epa.gov>; Husby, Peter <Husby.Peter@epa.gov>; Jordan, Deborah <Jordan.Deborah@epa.gov>; Shanahan, Eileen <Shanahan.Eileen@epa.gov>

Subject: R9 news clips for HQ

Hi all,

Please find attached the weekly "just the greatest hits" rundown of Region 9 clips that we submit to HQ.

Mike Alpern - Director, Public Affairs

U.S. EPA Region 9 (Pacific Southwest)

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